

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A bone fixation apparatus for a rod system comprising:
- a bone anchor having a proximal end for engaging a driving device and a distal end for engaging a bone;
 - a rod;
 - a housing coupled to said proximal end of said bone anchor having opposed spaced-apart flanges extending longitudinally defining a channel therebetween for receiving ~~[[a]]~~said rod, said flanges having an outer surface and an inner surface having at a portion of female threads therein;
 - a locking assembly for locking said ~~surgical~~-rod to said housing in contact with said proximal end of said bone anchor;
- wherein said locking assembly further comprises an upper cap and a lower cap joined by a post and rotatable relative one to the other, wherein said upper cap is a generally cylindrical member having an outer surface containing at least a portion of male threads thereon and an inner cavity and an upper surface and a lower surface and wherein said inner cavity further comprises an opening to receive said post; and wherein said lower cap comprises an upper surface and a lower semi-cylindrical surface for engaging said rod; ~~and~~
- wherein said post is provided with an outer perimeter with a first profile and said opening is provided with a second profile that is geometrically similar; and
- wherein said rod is insertable into said channel of said housing and said locking assembly is thereafter insertable into said channel of said housing, and wherein a driving instrument is insertable into said inner cavity of said upper cap and rotates said upper cap relative to said lower cap about said post, thereby engaging said at least a portion of male threads with said at least a portion of female threads, thus causing said locking assembly to translate longitudinally toward said distal end of said anchor into a forcing relationship

27 with said rod, thus forcing said rod into locking relationship with said
28 proximal end of said anchor;
29 wherein said at least a portion of female threads extend into said housing to a first
30 depth and terminate above an upper surface of said rod when said rod is fully
31 received within said housing.

2. (Original) The bone fixation system of claim 1 wherein said bone anchor is a screw.
3. (Original) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 2 wherein said housing is fixed to said proximal end of said bone anchor so as to prevent angulation of said bone anchor.
4. (Original) The bone fixation system of claim 3 wherein said lower cap further comprises an extension of said lower semi-cylindrical surface dimensioned to reside within said channel.
5. (Original) The bone fixation system of claim 4 wherein said threads on said upper cap and said threads in said flanges further comprise at least one start thread timed to properly engage each other when said extension is located within said channel.
6. (Original) The bone fixation system of claim 1 wherein said bone anchor is a hook.
7. (Original) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 6 wherein said housing is fixed to said proximal end of said hook so as to prevent angulation thereof.
8. (Original) The bone fixation system of claim 7 wherein said lower cap further comprises an extension of said lower semi-cylindrical surface dimensioned to reside within said channel.
9. (Original) The bone fixation system of claim 8 wherein said threads on said upper cap and said threads in said flanges further comprise at least one start thread timed to properly engage each other when said extension is located within said channel.

10. (Original) The bone fixation system of claim 1 wherein said bone anchor is a polyaxial screw further comprising a head disposed at said distal end having a conic or aspheric upper surface and a partially spherical lower surface and defining a periphery at a junction of said upper and lower surfaces.
11. (Original) The bone fixation system of claim 10 wherein said lower cap further comprises an extension of said lower semi-cylindrical surface dimensioned to reside within said channel.
12. (Original) The bone fixation system of claim 11 wherein said threads on said upper cap and said threads in said flanges further comprise at least one start thread timed to properly engage each other when said extension is located within said channel.
13. (Original) The bone fixation system of claim 12 wherein said proximal end of said polyaxial screw further comprises a depression disposed about said periphery.
14. (Original) The bone fixation system of claim 13 wherein said inner surface of said flanges further comprise an appurtenance projecting substantially radially inwardly.
15. (Original) The bone fixation system of claim 14 wherein said polyaxial screw is removable from said housing when said depression aligns with said appurtenance, but is not removable when said depression is not aligned with said appurtenance.

1 16. (Withdrawn) A bone fixation apparatus for a rod system comprising:
2 a bone anchor having a proximal end for engagement with a driving device and a
3 distal end for engagement with a bone;
4 a housing coupled to said proximal end of said bone anchor having opposed
5 spaced-apart flanges extending longitudinally and having a channel
6 therebetween to receive a surgical rod therein, each flange having an outer
7 surface and an inner surface and an undercut within said inner surface;
8 a locking assembly for locking said surgical rod to said housing in contact with
9 said proximal end of said bone anchor, further comprising an upper cap and a
10 lower cap joined by a post and rotatable relative one to the other, wherein said
11 upper cap is a generally cylindrical member having an outer surface and an
12 inner cavity and an upper surface and a lower surface having camming
13 surfaces thereon and wherein said inner cavity further comprises an opening
14 to receive said post;
15 wherein said outer surface has a first wing and a second wing projecting radially
16 outwardly therefrom for insertion into said undercut to prevent removal of
17 said locking assembly; and
18 wherein said lower cap further comprises an upper surface having camming
19 surfaces thereon for engagement with said camming surfaces of said upper
20 cap and a lower semi-cylindrical surface for engaging said rod;
21 wherein said rod is insertable into said channel of said housing and said locking
22 assembly is thereafter insertable into said channel of said housing, and
23 wherein a driving instrument is insertable into said inner cavity of said upper
24 cap and rotates said upper cap relative to said lower cap about said post,
25 thereby moving said camming surfaces of said upper cap relative to said
26 camming surfaces of said lower cap, thus causing said lower cap to translate
27 longitudinally toward said distal end of said anchor into a forcing relationship
28 with said rod, thus forcing said rod into a locking relationship with said
29 proximal end of said anchor.

17. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 16 wherein said bone anchor is a screw.
18. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 17 wherein said housing is fixed to said proximal end of said bone anchor so as to prevent angulation of said bone anchor.
19. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 18 wherein said undercut further comprises a slot adjacent thereto disposed radially outwardly of said undercut having an inner surface and an outer surface and longitudinal dimension greater than that of said undercut.
20. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 19 wherein said first wing and said second wing further comprise ridges located outwardly thereof.
21. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 20 wherein said ridges engage said inner surfaces of said slots in said flanges to prevent splaying.
22. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 21 wherein said post further comprises a first timing groove and a second timing groove disposed longitudinally thereon.
23. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 22 wherein said upper cap further comprises a projection in said opening.
24. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 23 wherein said upper cap and said first and second timing grooves are timed such that said projection mates with said first timing groove when said locking assembly is in an unlocked position and mates with said second timing groove when said locking assembly is rotated to a locked position.

25. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 24 wherein said upper cap further comprises a stop disposed adjacent said upper surface thereof and projecting radially outwardly from said outer surface of said upper cap, said stop being located out of phase with said wings.
26. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 25 wherein said housing further comprises a depression disposed about said inner surface of said flanges.
27. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 26 wherein said stop engages said depression when said upper cap is rotated into a locked position.
28. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 16 wherein said bone anchor is a hook.
29. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 28 wherein said housing is fixed to said proximal end of said bone anchor so as to prevent angulation of said bone anchor.
30. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 29 wherein said undercut further comprises a slot adjacent thereto disposed radially outwardly of said undercut having an inner surface and an outer surface and longitudinal dimension greater than that of said undercut.
31. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 30 wherein said first wing and said second wing further comprise ridges located outwardly thereof.
32. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 31 wherein said ridges engage said inner surfaces of said slots in said flanges to prevent splaying.
33. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 32 wherein said post further comprises a first timing groove and a second timing groove disposed longitudinally thereon.

34. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 33 wherein said upper cap further comprises a projection in said opening.
35. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 34 wherein said upper cap and said first and second timing grooves are timed such that said projection mates with said first timing groove when said locking assembly is in an unlocked position and mates with said second timing groove when said locking assembly is rotated to a locked position.
36. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 35 wherein said upper cap further comprises a stop disposed adjacent said upper surface thereof and projecting radially outwardly from said outer surface of said upper cap, said stop being located out of phase with said wings.
37. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 36 wherein said housing further comprises a depression disposed about said inner surface of said flanges.
38. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 37 wherein said stop engages said depression when said upper cap is rotated into a locked position.
39. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 17 wherein said housing further comprises a separable body for lockable attachment to said proximal end of said screw.
40. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 39 wherein said separable body further comprises an upper portion having an outer diameter and an inner diameter and a lower portion having an outer diameter and an inner diameter and wherein said outer diameter of said lower portion is less than said outer diameter of said upper portion.
41. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 40 wherein said lower portion further comprises fingers oriented longitudinally and extending from said upper portion terminating at a distal end, wherein said fingers receive said proximal end of said screw in varying orientations.

42. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 41 wherein said distal end of said fingers define an inner diameter and an outer diameter.
43. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 42 wherein said lower portion further comprises a ring disposed externally on said fingers and slideable from an unlocked position to a locked position.
44. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 43 wherein said inner diameter of said ring at a bottom end thereof is slightly less than said outer diameter of said fingers such that as said ring is slid from said unlocked position to said locked position, said ring imparts a radial force on said fingers, thus locking said proximal end of said screw in a given orientation.
45. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 44 wherein said undercut further comprises a slot adjacent thereto disposed radially outwardly of said undercut having an inner surface and an outer surface and longitudinal dimension greater than that of said undercut.
46. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 45 wherein said first wing and said second wing further comprise ridges located outwardly thereof.
47. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 46 wherein said ridges engage said inner surfaces of said slots in said flanges to prevent splaying.
48. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 47 wherein said post further comprises a first timing groove and a second timing groove disposed longitudinally thereon.
49. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 48 wherein said upper cap further comprises a projection in said opening.
50. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 49 wherein said upper cap and said first and second timing grooves are timed such that said projection mates with said first timing groove when said locking assembly is in an unlocked

position and mates with said second timing groove when said locking assembly is rotated to a locked position.

51. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 50 wherein said upper cap further comprises a stop disposed adjacent said upper surface thereof and projecting radially outwardly from, said outer surface of said upper cap, said stop being located out of phase with said wings.
52. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 51 wherein said housing further comprises a depression disposed about said inner surface of said flanges.
53. (Withdrawn) The bone fixation apparatus of claim 52 wherein said stop engages said depression when said upper cap is rotated into a locked position.

1 54. (Withdrawn) A bone fixation apparatus for a rod system comprising:
2 a bone anchor having a proximal end for engagement with a driving device and a
3 distal end for engagement with a bone;
4 a housing coupled to said proximal end of said bone anchor having opposed
5 spaced-apart flanges extending longitudinally and having a channel
6 therebetween to receive a surgical rod therein, each flange having an outer
7 surface and an inner surface, said outer surface having a circumferential
8 groove therein;
9 a locking assembly for locking said surgical rod to said housing in contact with
10 said proximal end of said bone anchor, further comprising an upper cap and a
11 lower cap joined by a post and rotatable relative one to the other, wherein said
12 upper cap is a generally cylindrical member having an outer surface and an
13 inner cavity and an upper surface and a lower surface having camming
14 surfaces thereon and wherein said inner cavity further comprises an opening
15 to receive said post;
16 wherein said outer surface has a first wing and a second wing projecting radially
17 outwardly therefrom for insertion into said circumferential groove in said
18 outer surface of said housing to prevent removal of said locking assembly; and
19 wherein said lower cap further comprises an upper surface having camming
20 surfaces thereon for engagement with said camming surfaces of said upper
21 cap and a lower semi-cylindrical surface for engaging said rod;
22 wherein said rod is insertable into said channel of said housing and said locking
23 assembly is thereafter insertable into said channel of said housing, and
24 wherein a driving instrument is insertable into said inner cavity of said upper
25 cap and rotates said upper cap relative to said lower cap about said post,
26 thereby moving said camming surfaces of said upper cap relative to said
27 camming surfaces of said lower cap, thus causing said lower cap to translate
28 longitudinally toward said distal end of said anchor into a forcing relationship

29 with said rod, thus forcing said rod into a locking relationship with said
30 proximal end of said anchor.

1 55. (New) A bone fixation apparatus for a rod system comprising:
2 a rod;
3 a bone anchor having a first end for engaging bone, and a second end
4 having a housing;
5 said housing is provided with opposed spaced-apart flanges defining a
6 channel therebetween for receiving said rod;
7 a locking assembly having an upper cap and a lower cap;
8 said flanges having an outer surface, and an inner surface having female
9 threads for threadedly receiving said locking assembly;
10 said lower cap having a first end with a concave profile that matingly
11 engages said rod in one of two possible orientations, and a second end
12 having an extension member, said extension member having an outer
13 perimeter with a first profile;
14 said upper cap having a first end, a second end, an outer surface, and an
15 opening through said first end and said second end, and said outer
16 surface having one or more portions of male threads, said opening
17 having an interior surface forming a second profile;
18 wherein said first profile and said second profile are geometrically similar;
19 and
20 wherein no more than two orientations of said second profile relative to
21 said first profile allows said opening to be axially received on said
22 extension member;
23 wherein said at least a portion of female threads extend into said housing
24 and terminate above the height of said rod when said rod is fully
25 received within said housing.

56. (New) The bone fixation apparatus for a rod system of claim 55, wherein said extension member is symmetric about a longitudinal axis.
57. (New) The bone fixation apparatus for a rod system of claim 55, wherein said extension member is symmetric about a longitudinal plane.
58. (New) The bone fixation apparatus for a rod system of claim 55, wherein said extension member is asymmetric about a longitudinal axis.
59. (New) The bone fixation apparatus for a rod system of claim 55, wherein said extension member is asymmetric about a longitudinal plane.
60. (New) The bone fixation apparatus for a rod system of claim 55, wherein said extension member is a post.
61. (New) The bone fixation apparatus for a rod system of claim 55, wherein said one or two orientations are also proper orientations to align said male threads with said female threads.

1 62. (New) A bone fixation apparatus for a rod system comprising:
2 a bone anchor having a first end for engaging bone, and a second end
3 having a housing having an interior surface, wherein said interior
4 surface is provided with female threads;
5 a locking assembly having an upper cap and a lower cap;
6 said housing axially receiving said locking assembly, wherein said lower
7 cap is received within said housing in no more than two orientations;
8 said lower cap having a first end, and a second end, said second end
9 having a post protruding therefrom;
10 said upper cap having a first end, a second end, an outer surface, and an
11 opening through said first and second end, and said outer surface
12 having one or more portions of male threads;
13 wherein one or two orientations of said opening relative to said extension
14 member allows said opening to be axially received on said extension
15 member;
16 wherein said at least a portion of female threads extend into said housing
17 and terminate above the height of said rod when said rod is fully
18 received within said housing.

63. (New) The bone fixation apparatus for a rod system of claim 62, wherein said
post is symmetric about a longitudinal axis.

64. (New) The bone fixation apparatus for a rod system of claim 62, wherein said
post is symmetric about a longitudinal plane.

65. (New) The bone fixation apparatus for a rod system of claim 62, wherein said
post is asymmetric about a longitudinal axis.

66. (New) The bone fixation apparatus for a rod system of claim 62, wherein said post is asymmetric about a longitudinal plane.
67. (New) The bone fixation apparatus for a rod system of claim 62, wherein said one or two orientations are also proper orientations to align said male threads with said female threads.

1 68. (New) A bone fixation apparatus for a rod system comprising:
2 a rod;
3 a bone anchor having a first end for engaging bone, and a second end
4 having a housing provided with an interior surface, wherein said
5 interior surface is provided with female threads;
6 a locking assembly having an upper cap and a lower cap;
7 said housing axially receiving said locking assembly,
8 said lower cap having a first end and a second end; wherein said first end
9 is provided with a first orientation means for providing proper
10 orientation between said housing and said lower cap, said second end
11 is provided with a second orientation means for providing proper
12 orientation between said lower cap and said upper cap;
13 said upper cap having an outer surface and an opening, wherein said
14 opening matingly engages said second orientation means, and said
15 outer surface is provided with one or more portions of male threads;
16 and
17 wherein when said first orientation means is properly oriented with respect
18 to said housing and said upper cap opening is properly oriented with
19 respect to said second orientation means, said male threads will align
20 with said female threads to prevent cross threading;
21 wherein said at least a portion of female threads extend into said housing
22 to a depth no deeper than the height of said rod, when said rod is fully
23 received within said housing.